



Ozone Outreach & Awareness:

Utilizing Paid Media, Outreach, & Research to Change Behavior

Sara O'Keefe and Sarah Schmitz
Denver Regional Air Quality Council





INTRODUCTION





About Us

- **Sara O’Keefe & Sarah Schmitz**
 - **Communication & Outreach Team**
 - **Denver Regional Air Quality Council**
- **RAQC**
 - **Lead air quality planning agency**
 - **In existence since 1989**
 - **Governed by a nine-member board**
 - **local government, business, & citizen reps, two state cabinet members**





Our Mission

- Develop efficient and cost-effective air quality planning initiatives with input from:
 - All levels of government
 - Private sector
 - Stakeholder groups & nonprofits
 - Citizens
- Primary task is to prepare implementation plans to show compliance with federal air quality standards





The Pollutants

- RAQC is a regional planning agency with no regulatory or lobbying authority
- Works with the six common or “criteria” pollutants as defined by the U.S. EPA
 - Carbon Monoxide (CO)
 - Lead
 - Nitrogen Oxide (NO_x)
 - Particulate Matter (PM_{2.5} & PM₁₀)
 - Sulfur Dioxide (SO₂)
 - **Ozone (O₃)**





Air Quality in Denver

- Air quality governed by the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), set by U.S. EPA
- Standards intended to protect public health, especially sensitive populations
- Denver region is currently in compliance with all NAAQS after previously violating five of the six standards
 - Region reached historic achievement in 2002
- Although in attainment, region close to violation of ozone standard





About Ozone

- Ozone is formed when VOCs combine with NO_x under heat and sunlight; this is a summertime pollutant
- Ozone can trigger attacks and symptoms in individuals with pre-existing health conditions, such as asthma or other respiratory infections
- 8-Hour Standard
 - Violations of the standard in 2000 & 2003
 - Region currently deferred nonattainment status
 - Downward trend through 2012





Regulatory Plan – EAC

- Federally-enforceable SIP
- Deferred nonattainment status
- Strategies to ensure the region will comply with federal standard by 2007
 - Mobile, point, area, and off road
- Strategies fully implemented by end of 2005





Need for Enhanced Outreach

- Denver region close to violation of federal standard; must meet standard by 2007
- Confusion over stratospheric and tropospheric ozone
- Public health issues; Colorado has among highest asthma rates
- Complication of sources of ozone
- Regulatory plan in place; lack of comprehensive voluntary plan





Next Steps

- Identification of:
 - Voluntary program goals
 - Stakeholders
 - Potential obstacles
 - Funding
 - Staffing





PLANNING PROCESS





Goals & Objectives

- Use primary research to gauge current level of understanding & awareness
- Engage a broad audience through a comprehensive approach
- Develop simple and accessible messages
- Involve stakeholders
- Raise awareness & understanding
- Motivate citizens to change ozone causing behavior





Funding

- **\$1 million for year one; about half for year two; same for year three**
 - **Congestion Mitigation / Air Quality**
 - **StEPP Foundation**
 - **Envirotest Systems, Corp.**
 - **Colo. Dept. of Public Health & Environment**
 - **American Lung Association of Colo.**
 - **National Jewish Medical & Research Center**





Advisory Committee

- Public information and outreach representatives from partnering organizations
 - Represent local and state government, nonprofit & business organizations
- Provide feedback on all aspects of campaign
- Serve as an oversight and decision-making committee





Need for Expert Advice

- Need to hire objective & creative PR and advertising professionals
- Need for research firm to develop public opinion research
- Need for competitive process
 - Request for Proposals
 - OAC interviewed potential candidates
 - Selected team of seasoned specialists in PR, advertising, & research





Tone & Messaging Development

- **Tone and approach**
 - Action-oriented
 - Direct & simple
 - Accessible – friendly & non-threatening
 - Contemporary
 - Simple & memorable
- **Gaining feedback from stakeholders proved to be vital**
- **Arguably the most important stage of program planning; influenced entire campaign**





Campaign Components

- Ozone Action Alerts
- Research
 - Focus groups
 - Telephone surveys
- Paid Media
 - Television
 - Radio
 - Outdoor
- Outreach
 - Public
 - Media
 - Local Government





Ozone Action Alerts

- Forecasts to warn citizens of the potential for elevated ozone levels
 - Sent out via email and fax
 - Government organizations, business, media, nonprofits, citizens
 - Posted on a number of community and government web sites
 - Electronic highway message boards





Research

- **Pre-campaign focus groups**
 - Deeper exploration of current attitudes & behavior about ozone
 - Determine types of actions people are willing to adopt
- **Pre- and post-campaign telephone surveys**
 - Provided current knowledge of ozone to guide tone & messages





Paid Media

- **Television**
 - Two animated PSAs to air on all local stations & cable networks
- **Radio**
 - :10 & :15 traffic tag PSAs to air on radio stations during live traffic reports
- **Outdoor**
 - Five large billboards at nine rotating locations
 - 500 pump topper signs
 - 50 bus tails





Public Outreach

- Web site (English & Spanish)
 - About ozone, newsroom, events, blog
- Events
 - AirWaves
 - Car Care Fairs
 - Mow Down Pollution
 - Gas Can Exchange
 - Clean Air Crew
 - Participation in existing events
- Educational Items





Media Outreach

- Media audit
- Meteorologists meetings
- Program web site, which includes newsroom





Local Government Outreach

- o Gas cap testing program
- o Sub-grant program





RESULTS & LESSONS LEARNED





Paid Media

	Paid Media	Bonus Media	Total
Television (7 weeks)	543	308	851
Outdoor (3 months)	5	---	5
Pump Toppers (2 months)	248	257	505
Transit (2 months)	---	50	50
Radio (7 weeks)	676	115	791
TOTAL	1,472 (67%)	730 (33%)	2,202





TV Commercials

:30 If You Drive...

:30 If You Mow...

- Please visit OzoneAware.org to view the commercials; they have been removed from the presentation due to their large size





Outdoor



Public Outreach

Web site

- 6,000 unique visitors June – August
- Over 60 citizens & 40 media reps signed up to receive OAA





Public Outreach

- o **AirWaves**

- Two winning entries selected
- Four students received \$3,000
- Two schools received \$1,000
- Radio spots ran for 6 weeks, 28 times/week





Public Outreach

- **Car Care Fairs**

- 21 locations in 14 cities
- Over 500 vehicles inspected
- 300 gas cans distributed

- **Mow Down Pollution**

- 7 locations in 7 cities
- Recycled over 50 mowers & trimmers; 20 gas cans
- Sold over 160 new electric mowers; gave out over 120 new gas cans
- 360 lbs VOCs reduced





Public Outreach

- o **Gas Can Exchange**
 - 250 old gas cans recycled
 - 470 new non-spill, non-permeable cans distributed
 - 300 lbs VOCs reduced



● ● ● | Public Outreach

- **Clean Air Crew**
 - Multicultural youth dance group, ages 11 – 23
 - Designed costumes and developed energetic routine
 - Performed at 8 community events throughout summer





Public Outreach

- Participation in existing events
 - Bike to Work Day
 - RideSmart Thursdays





Public Outreach



LET'S TAKE CARE OF OUR SUMMER AIR.

OzoneAware.org



LET'S TAKE CARE OF OUR SUMMER AIR.



LET'S TAKE CARE OF OUR SUMMER AIR.



OZONE ACTION ALERT:

THE REGIONAL AIR QUALITY COUNCIL AND THE COLO. DEPT. OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT HAVE ISSUED AN ALERT FOR THE METRO-DENVER AND FRONT RANGE REGION. HOT TEMPERATURES, CLEAR SUMMER SKIES, AND LIGHT-TO-MODERATE WINDS MAY LEAD TO INCREASED GROUND-LEVEL OZONE THROUGHOUT THE REGION. THIS OZONE ACTION ALERT IS IN EFFECT UNTIL 4:00 P.M. TOMORROW.

SO WHAT'S THE DIRT ON OZONE?

Ground level ozone pollution is created when emissions from everyday items – such as gasoline-powered vehicles and lawn equipment, and household paints, stains and solvents – combine with other pollutants in the atmosphere on hot, summer days.

IT CAN AFFECT YOU.

At ground level, ozone pollution is harmful to all of us, especially the young and elderly. Ozone can also trigger attacks and symptoms in individuals with pre-existing health conditions, such as asthma or other respiratory infections.

High levels of ozone pollution often affect healthy people who work or exercise outdoors and can cause breathing difficulties, eye irritation and reduced resistance to lung infections and colds with exposure for prolonged periods.

CHILL OUT AND BREATHE EASY.

The fewer ozone-causing emissions you produce on hot, still, summer days, the better. Reduce pollution by doing these simple things:

- > Keep your car well maintained
- > Refuel in the evening on hot sunny days
- > Stop at the click – don't overfill gas tank
- > Mow in the evening on hot sunny days
- > Tighten gas cap after refueling



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

24-Hour Air Quality Hotline: 303.758.4848
Media Inquiries: 303.540.1887 (pager)
Ozone Aware: www.OzoneAware.org
RAQC: 303.629.5450 or www.raqc.org
CDPHE: 303.692.3100

REFUEL IN THE EVENING.



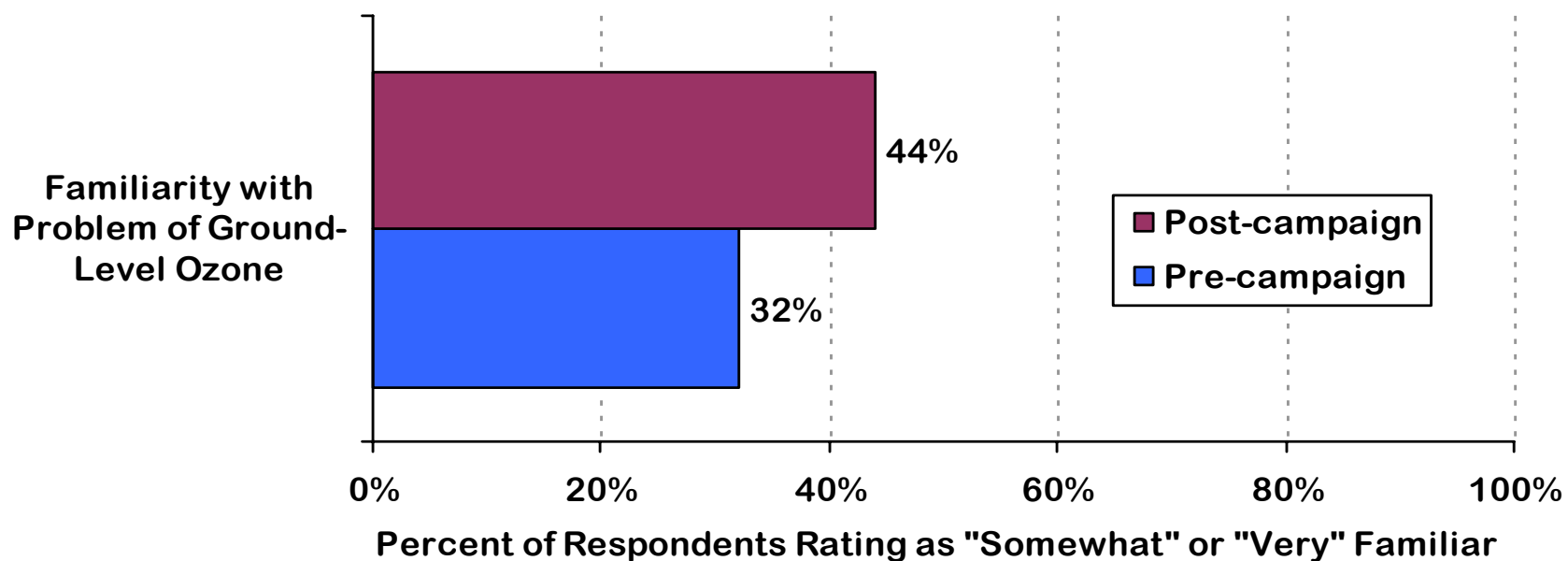
LET'S TAKE CARE OF OUR SUMMER AIR.
OzoneAware.org





Research Outcomes

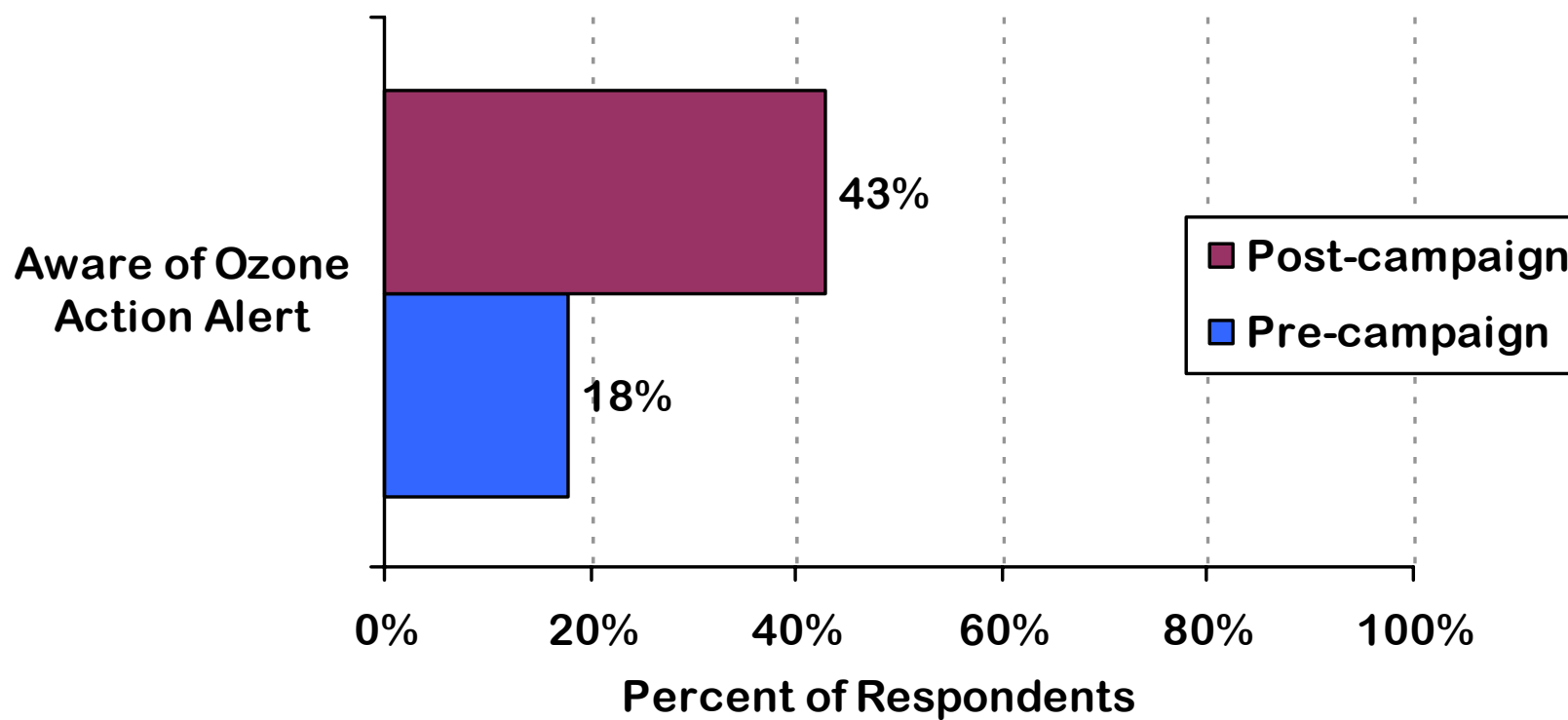
Familiarity with the Problem of Ground-level Ozone





Research Outcomes

Awareness of Ozone Action Alert





Lessons Learned

○ Challenges

- Lack of total cooperation with events partners
- Difficulties in working with youth group
- Lack of wide-spread media coverage
- Almost too many different funding sources
- Campaign was successful in garnering attention, but lacked in providing a deeper understanding of the issues
 - Which did not translate to changes in behavior
- Messages did not address why citizens should take action





Lessons Learned

o Successes

- Consultants proved to be an invaluable asset to campaign
 - Over 30% of total buy was bonus; media buyer key in negotiating
- Research was well worth funding spent; provides baseline for determining future program results
- Simple messages were easy to understand
- Media coverage was more successful in getting people to events than advertising
- Partner organizations were key in helping to communicate the messages





New for 2006

- **Ozone Education Video**
 - To provide a deeper understanding of the issues, including health aspects
- **Summer Chill “Pledge” Campaign**
 - A fun, memorable way to encourage behavior change
- **Revised Clean Air Crew**
 - Paid college students who will hand out pledge cards at large events
- **Increased media outreach & education**
- **EnvironMinute radio “programming”**





Pledge to Chill

PLEDGE TO CHILL.

Join the non-movement. Pledge to do less on hot summer days.

Check the activities you'll commit to and mail back or register with us online at OzoneAware.org.

- ☐ drive less, walk to lunch, run errands after work
- ☐ refuel your car after 5 p.m. and stop at the click
- ☐ mow after 5 p.m. on hot summer days

Name _____ Email _____

Street Address _____ City/State/Zip _____

- ☐ I would like my name to appear on your web site's pledge page.

The Regional Air Quality Council does not sell or give away personal information from the information you provide. It is used solely for the purposes of sending you ozone updates and special offers.

SO WHAT'S THE DIRT ON OZONE POLLUTION?

Ground level ozone pollution is created when emissions from everyday items such as gasoline-powered vehicles and lawn equipment, and household paints, stains and solvents, combine with other pollutants in the atmosphere on hot, summer days. Ground level ozone is harmful to our health and environment. We can reduce our Ozone Alert days by working together. Take the pledge this summer to help take care of our summer air.



LET'S TAKE CARE OF OUR SUMMER AIR.

OzoneAware.org





BREAK: 5 MINUTES





BREAKOUT SESSION

- Developing a social marketing message
 - Who is going to do what differently in the end? (John Strand, AED)
 - Make the message accessible & simple
 - Focus the message (health, environmental, economic, etc.)





Instructions

- **Step 1**
 - Break out into small groups of 4 to 6 people (2 min.)

- **Step 2**
 - Share an outreach or education project with the group that you are currently or will be working on (15 min.)





Instructions

- **Step 3**

- As a group, choose one program to use as a model to share with the larger group (3 minutes)

- **Step 4**

- Identify one key goal/objective of the selected program, including a target audience (5 minutes)





Instructions

- **Step 5**
 - Based on the goal identified, develop one key message and three ways in which it will be communicated (5 minutes)

- **Step 6**
 - Share your goal, target audience, message, & communication strategies with the larger group (5 minutes)





Contact Information

Sara O'Keefe

(303) 629-5450 x220

sokeefe@raqc.org

Sarah Schmitz

(303) 629-5450 x210

sschmitz@raqc.org

